

**MINUTES OF THE LOCAL MEETING OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
May 26, 2004**

The local jurisdiction meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 8:30 a.m., on May 26, 2004, at The Heathman Lodge, 7801 NE Greenwood Drive, Vancouver, Washington.

Commissioners present at the meeting were: Chair Aubrey Davis, Ed Barnes, Elmira Forner, A. Michèle Maher, Dan O'Neal and Dale Stedman.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Davis called the meeting to order and opened the roundtable discussion with participant introductions.

Doug MacDonald, Secretary, WSDOT, expressed the Department's appreciation for being included in today's discussion.

OPENING REMARKS

Mayor Royce Pollard, City of Vancouver, thanked the Commission and Department for coming to Southwest Washington. He shared highlights of various transportation projects in the Vancouver area.

Don Wagner, Regional Administrator, Southwest Region, provided a geographic overview of Southwest Washington. He talked about traffic congestion in the Vancouver area and the need for the Columbia River Crossing project.

COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING PROJECT

Dale Himes, Project Director, Columbia River Crossing, provided information to the Commission regarding project funding.

Mayor Pollard commented on the I-5 corridor bottleneck at the Columbia River Crossing. Traffic congestion at the bridge impacts freight transportation and adds additional cost to the movement of goods. He explained that the project is in the design phase and is expected to begin in 2006.

Representative Jim Moeller shared his concerns regarding whether or not the Delta Park project will be completed.

Senator Benton commented on Delta Park's project timeline and allocated funds.

OREGON'S NEW PUBLIC PRIVATE LEGISLATION

Bruce Warner, Director, Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), briefed the Commission regarding Oregon's participation in the Innovative Partnerships Program (OIPP). He explained that the 2001 Legislature directed ODOT to explore private sector participation in developing transportation projects. The OIPP was created by the Legislature in 2003. The objective of the OIPP was to develop partnerships with private entities and government in order to expedite project delivery process, maximize innovation and entrepreneurship, and leverage public funds with private capital.

Stuart Foster, Chair, Oregon Transportation Commission (OTC), stated that the proposed OIPP rules should be adopted by the OTC by the end of summer 2004.

PANEL: FREIGHT AND PORTS

Overview of Freight

Lance Grenzeback, Senior Vice President, Cambridge Systematics, Inc., provided a brief summary of the freight/rail capacity in the Portland/Vancouver area. He explained that by the year 2020 traffic, rail and river capacity demands at the I-5/I-205 Columbia River crossing would have doubled as a result of freight transportation demands. He commented on the impact to the regional economy, and why this impact will continue to increase as freight transportation needs continue to grow.

Ports' Perspective on Freight Transportation

Arch Miller, Commission Chair, Port of Vancouver, welcomed the Commission to Vancouver and provided a general overview of the Port of Vancouver.

Larry Paulson, Executive Director, Port of Vancouver, provided a briefing regarding Washington Public Ports Association 2004 Marine Cargo Forecast. He explained that the Washington Public Ports Association periodically conducts Marine Cargo forecasts and performance assessments of the state's marine port transportation system. The studies answer questions regarding marine cargo growth, and whether or not we will have the necessary rail, waterway and road systems in place to handle the growth. The forecast helps policy makers and planners make well-informed decisions.

Fred Swanstrom, Commissioner, Port of Kalama, shared that the Port of Kalama is the third largest port on the west coast for tonnage shipped. The port is self-supporting, but will be requesting funds for projects outside the port. He commented on the various transportation methods that the port utilizes for shipping. He briefly commented on the necessity of the Columbia River Channel Deepening project.

George Cress, Director, Planning & Development, Port of Longview, provided an overview of the products shipped by the Port of Longview. He shared that the port has

recently purchased surrounding property. It has also completed a rail project that will be expanded in the future.

Freight Rail

Ron Jackson, General Manager, Pacific Northwest Division, Burlington Northern-Santa Fe, discussed factors that impact rail industry service and customer needs. He shared Burlington Northern-Santa Fe's response to those needs.

Betty Sue Morris, Chair, Clark County Commission, shared information regarding the expansion of the county-owned rail line. She commented on the partnership between Burlington Northern Santa-Fe and the Port of Vancouver.

Steve Schulte, Transportation Program Manager, Clark County Public Works, discussed rail and barge opportunities, their benefits to the trucking industry, and local communities.

Steamship Industry

Peter Bennett, Vice President, Pacific Coast Operations, K-Line American Inc., stated that freight is a victim of congestion rather than the cause. He shared that he participated in a group that looked at the I-5 crossing issue.

River Freight

John Pigott, Port Captain, Tidewater Barge Line and Chair, Columbia River Towboat Association, commented on the benefits of moving freight by barge.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS

Dean Lookingbill, Executive Director, Regional Transportation Council (RTC), provided a summary of the RTC's Transportation Plan. He explained congestion issues in the region and along the Columbia River crossing.

Pete Capell, Director/County Engineer, Clark County Public Works, commented on significant project funding in the Clark County area.

Thayer Rorabaugh, Manager of Transportation Engineering, City of Vancouver, commented on transportation project financing and implementation at the local level. He shared that the City of Vancouver and WSDOT are currently working in partnership on various projects in the area.

Rosemary Siipola, Transportation Planning Manager, Southwest Washington Regional Planning Organization, shared highlights of key projects in the local area.

Steve Gorcester, Executive Director, Transportation Improvement Board (TIB), explained TIB's role and provided an overview of TIB's program. He stated that TIB administers several transportation related programs in Southwest Washington.

PANEL: COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE

Update on Gorge Master Plan

Martha Bennett, Executive Director, Columbia River Gorge Commission, provided a background briefing of the Commission's function and explained its uniqueness. She provided a brief outline of the Gorge Master Plan.

PANEL: COLUMBIA RIVER CHANNEL DEEPENING

Dave Hunt, Executive Director, Columbia River Channel Deepening Coalition, opened the discussion with introductions of Steve Harms, United Harvest, Jerry Johnston, United Longshore Warehouse Union, Steve Brown, Columbia River Pilots Association, Kathleen Davis, Director, Highways & Local Programs, WSDOT, and Lanny Cawley, Executive Director, Port of Kalama.

Mr. Cawley provided an overview of the deepening project's benefits to the Port of Kalama.

Mr. Johnston explained the channel deepening projects impact on the local economy.

Mr. Harms explained that the channel deepening would provide benefits such as the ability for large ships to use the channel, which would result in shipping cost reduction.

Mr. Brown shared information about the channel's ability to handle larger ships. He explained vessel delays based on tides.

Ms. Davis briefly described appropriated funds to the deepening project.

TRANSIT: SUSTAINING QUALITY TRANSPORTATION IN CLARK COUNTY

Jeanne Harris, Chair, C-TRAN Board of Directors, explained the Board's commitment to transit services, and the importance of those services to the citizens of Clark County.

Lynne Griffith, Executive Director/CEO, C-Tran, provided a briefing regarding the systems productivity growth. She explained innovative services that have been implemented, and provided an overview of C-TRAN's strategic plan.

LEWIS & CLARK BICENTENNIAL UPDATE

Arlene Johnson, Director, Lewis & Clark Expedition Bicentennial Committee, provided an update regarding the status of the bicentennial preparations. She explained the Committee's participation in local community events.

Nabiel Shawa, Washougal City Manager, explained the City of Washougal's participation in the development of the Captain William Clark Park at Cotton Wood Beach. He also discussed the city's involvement in local transportation projects.

PANEL: COLUMBIA RIVER GORGE (cont'd)

Transportation Issues in the Gorge

Mayor Brian Prigel, City of Bingen, provided an overview of changes that have taken place in the gorge in recent years. He explained that tourism has become a large part of the area's economy. He shared information on the city's project partnerships with WSDOT.

Robert Talent, Commissioner, Skamania County, touched on various highway conditions throughout the tri-county area. He also commented on safety corridor improvements to the area.

AIRPORT CAPACITY IN CLARK COUNTY

John Sibold, Director, WSDOT Aviation Division, provided a brief history of Clark County airports.

Stan Allison, Manager, WSDOT Aviation Operations, briefed the Commission regarding the existing airports in Clark County. He explained why there is the need for a new airport, and shared some of the planning history. The next steps would be for the Regional Transportation Planning Office to identify airports of statewide significance, and address needs at the regional level for inclusion in the Washington Transportation Plan.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m., on May 26, 2004.

WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DALE STEDMAN, Chair

DANIEL O'NEAL, Vice-Chair

EDWARD BARNES, Member

AUBREY DAVIS, Member

ELMIRA FORNER, Member

RUTH FISHER, Member

A. MICHÈLE MAHER, Member

DOUGLAS MACDONALD, Ex-Officio Member

Secretary of Transportation

ATTEST:

JENNIFER ZIEGLER, Administrator

DATE OF APPROVAL